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Europe Army Regional Medical Command
Public Affairs Office
COM 06221 17 3317 or 3316
DSN 371-3317 or 3316

December 30, 2003

News release

Cynthia.Vaughan@hbg.amedd.army.mil

Contact: Cynthia Vaughan

DSN 371-3317

COM 06221 17 3317

Care continues at Wuerzburg

By Roger Teel

US Army Medical Activity, Wuerzburg Public Affairs

Wuerzburg, Germany – The Europe Regional Medical Command (ERMC) is providing hands-on help to the U.S. Army Medical Activity, Wuerzburg, as soldiers from the Wuerzburg-based 67th Combat Support Hospital prepare to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Physicians, nurses and administrators are en route to Wuerzburg or one of its nine outlying health clinics to sustain the community healthcare mission during the early stages of the deployment. Several augmentees arrived before the holidays to staff critical needs in the hospital pharmacy, emergency room and medical surgical ward.

"ERMC is dedicated to taking care of families and providing healthcare to beneficiaries in the Wuerzburg footprint," said ERMC Commander Brig. Gen. Elder Granger. Sixty-four physicians and nurses from clinics throughout Europe have been directed to report to Wuerzburg by the first week of January.

"If that's not enough, we'll send more," Granger added.

The Wuerzburg medical configuration is unique to Army medicine. The 67th CSH is a deployable combat hospital under the command and control of the 30th Medical Brigade and U.S. V Corps. The medical activity is an ERMC element consisting of the hospital and outlying health clinics that provide day-to-day healthcare for soldiers, families and retirees living in northern Bavaria.

"To our beneficiaries, the delivery of healthcare should be seamless," said hospital commander Col. Jeff Clark, who took command from Col. Patricia Lillis-Hearne when the rear detachment stood up Dec. 19. Colonel Lillis-Hearne will lead the 67th CSH in Iraq.

Clark noted that help from Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and the U.S. Army Medical Activity, Heidelberg, is greatly appreciated and vital to providing care in Wuerzburg facilities. He also praised the hospital's civilian workforce.

"Our civilians continue to be the backbone of our organization during this transition. They are stepping up and doing whatever needs to be done, showing their true colors of support as the foundations of our hospital."

"We're going to be fine," said Wuerzburg director of nursing Col. Mary Clark. "Our people will be attentive during this period of transition, and new people coming from other medical centers bring great experience and backgrounds with them. Their focus will be on taking over our healthcare mission and the outcome will be excellent."

The hospital will make one major clinic change. The family practice clinic and internal medicine clinic will merge effective Dec. 30. Clinic phone numbers will remain the same.

“This will be a smooth change,” said Angela Campbell, a licensed practical nurse at the internal medicine clinic. “It will allow better use of our staff by putting the two clinics together.”

The general surgery clinic will also relocate to the hospital’s fourth floor.

“We are fortunate to have world-class healthcare available at our host nation hospitals,” Clark, the commander, said. “We will continue to refer our patients to our Preferred Provider Network for certain specialties and for those requiring a higher level of care that we do not provide. Our patient liaisons and our physicians will, as always, closely follow our referred patients.

“To better provide mental health coverage for our patients, we are making some changes,” he continued. “We have assigned a psychiatrist, Maj. Jeff Drexler, in Schweinfurt to support the Schweinfurt and Bamberg communities.

“In early February, a U.S. Army Reserve psychiatrist will arrive in Vilseck to support Vilseck, Hohenfels and Grafenwoehr communities. In addition, Social Work Service providers in each of our communities are working as one team with each of our clinics to provide prompt evaluations and counseling,” Clark added.

Other pending staff additions include a pediatrician and psychiatrist in Wuerzburg in mid-January, a pediatrician in Schweinfurt and a family physician in Wuerzburg in mid-February.

The hospital is now hiring nurses, physicians, administrative assistants and clerks. Applicants must follow normal Resumix procedures outlined on the Civilian Human Resources Management Activity (CHRMA) website. Once a Resumix is posted, applicants should self-nominate as positions are announced. Positions are not limited to Wuerzburg, but are also in Schweinfurt, Bamberg, Grafenwoehr, Vilseck, Hohenfels, Kitzingen, Ansbach and Illenheim. The CHRMA website is: <http://www.chrma.hqusareur.army.mil>